

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Part of Me is one of the hit songs in Katy Perry's third studio album, *Teenage Dream: The Complete Confection*. This album is a repackage edition from her previous album, *Teenage Dream* with three newly recorded songs. The song, *Part of Me*, came out as a lead single for the album and was released on 13 February 2012. This song, representing women empowerment, earns many positive reviews and responses. At the time of interview with Montgomery in 2012, Katy Perry explained that she wrote the song when she was recording *Teenage Dream* but did not make it to the album because she was not ready yet to bring out the song to the public.

The music video was filmed over three days at USMC Camp Pendleton located in Oceanside, California (Schillaci, 2012). Later, the music video was released on 21 March 2012. The concept of the video is a narrative story in which Katy Perry plays as the protagonist. Throughout the music video, Katy Perry acts as a strong female who joins in the marines. The music video mainly shows herself following an intense training in a typical army physical training, including firepower, military courtesy, and combat training (Jean, 2012). In the scene when Katy Perry goes into the shop, she notices an advertisement saying, "All women are created equal, then some become marines". From the ad that Katy Perry saw in the video, it shows that women are able to do things equally as men. This is in line with Wollstonecraft's statement about liberal feminism, as explained by Tong that "woman is not a "mere means," or instrument, to one or more man's pleasure or happiness. Rather, she is an

“end-in-herself,” a rational agent whose dignity consists in having the capacity for self-determination” (2009, p. 16).

Wollstonecraft puts it well when she argues that women are able to be equal in doing their own actions and choices. All human beings deserve to have an equal opportunity to develop their abilities. Women can decide what they want to do without being interfered by other people. However, stereotypes of men and women often exaggerate the differences between these sexes. Women are expected to always behave in traditionally feminine ways but when women act in a characteristically different way, they are labeled as someone who could not act properly. A feminist movement aspires to break the myth and arouses public understanding that men and women are far more similar than they are different. In line with Wollstonecraft’s theory, Katy Perry’s music video represents how she strives to be a marine, a profession which is traditionally attributed to men. In this video she performs herself to be more masculine. It is related to the idea of gender performativity by Judith Butler that gender is not a stable identity but created from a repetition of actions, and it is real only to the extent on what is performed (1988, p. 519, 527).

Media is considered as the most important tool of society in the modern times. This collective communication has the power to influence a large audience by mass communication and create a wide impact (Narayana and Ahamad, 2016, p. 16). In the music videos, there are types of music video that promote the empowerment of womankind. The themes of female sexuality, independence, and self-love have been the opportunity to promote women empowerment. Among other Katy Perry’s previous videos that may seem cheerful and full of imagination, the theme in this music video appears to be different. In this video, Katy Perry is being an actual person rather than being a nerdy girl, California girl, or even an alien that she has starred in the previous music videos. Katy Perry herself tells MTV that the military scene is the perfect representation to show the affirmation of strength

(Sciarretto, 2012). According to Trust (2012), the song debuted at number one on the Billboard Hot 100 with 411,000 copies sold in its first week. The music video also got so many positive reviews from critics soon after it came out. Ray Rahman (2012) from Entertainment Weekly stated that this video is such an ‘intense ride’ and has a similarity with *G.I. Jane* movie which tells story of the first woman who attends the U.S. National Warfare Training Course.

Katy Perry displays the value of feminism in *Part of Me* video clip. Music videos have a significant impact on the public due to its capability to influence the viewers. Katy Perry has made a music video as a medium to convey the message of feminism. *Part of Me* music video shows how strong and unbreakable woman figure after she has gone through after a break-up situation. Katy Perry shows the equality and strength of a woman by her activities in marines. Moreover, Katy Perry also illustrates the form of female domination over men. There are actions which represent feminism in several scenes from the music video.

There is a major and drastic transformation in Katy Perry’s music video. Katy Perry turns herself from a feminine into a more masculine woman. It is obvious from her physical changes in which she turns into a uniformed army. Her decision to join the military shows the strength of her character as a woman. However, this representation bears an idea that women have to become more masculine in order to be seen as strong and equal as men. The effort of Katy Perry as a woman who tries to build her body to be strong in the army is in accordance with Susan Bordo’s idea in *Unbearable Weight* where she views bodies as a site of struggle (Bordo, 1993, p. 184). Katy Perry’s hair change and wrapping of her upper body in a bandage to hide her womanly parts are some of the things she does to be seen as a strong woman.

Susan Bordo's *Unbearable Weight* is a book containing a collection of essays that discuss about the representation of body according to Western culture and society. It also embodies a cultural approach to the body (Bordo, 1993, p. 35). Susan Bordo explains a lot about the effects of how the body should look and how people strive to meet the standard of Western culture. Westernized countries, like United States, value the bodies as a standard that is needed to be achieved. Women have to be white, tall, skinny, have big breasts, and many more. These kinds of representations make their bodies as an object of modification for the sake of beauty. Although this book was released in 1993, the information is still relevant until today. The reason why Susan Bordo's theory is chosen because Susan Bordo shows how the female body has moved from nature to culture. Female body can be shaped and trained through so many things in order to achieve what society wants where it shows woman's body as a struggle. The portrayal of Katy Perry's music video in *Part Of Me* shows the struggle of women's body to be more strong. This transition also shows the empowerment on how women are able to be independent.

In this research, the writer analyzed the representation of female empowerment in Katy Perry's Music Video, *Part of Me*. This paper discussed some scenes that show how the spirit of feminism is displayed in the music video. The writer decided to choose feminism criticism as an appropriate approach to this study. The study is divided into two parts, the first one is to describe Katy Perry's appearances which conforms femininity and the second is to analyze Katy Perry's transformation which supports female empowerment using Susan Bordo's Theory in *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and The Body*. Similar study had been done by Avisha (2015) with the title of "The Representation of Girl Power in Miley Cyrus' Appearances". My work is different from that of Avisha on the theory that is used and the object of the study. The previous study used Girl Power Theory in one of Miley Cyrus' music videos, *Wrecking Ball*. Meanwhile, this study will use Susan Bordo's Theory in

Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and The Body as the basis of theory to analyze Katy Perry's music video, *Part of Me*. One previous study that similar is Paramita (2016, p. 44-72) with the title of "Tubuh Perempuan dan Kekuasaan (Representasi Tubuh Perempuan Dalam Video Klip Beyonce Pretty Hurts)". The differences found is on the object of the video and the theory where Paramita examined the patriarchal ideology and mass media capitalism play a role to the formation of the female body. The last previous similar is a thesis from Putri (2015) with the title of "The representation of femininity as a power in Katy Perry's music video". The differences are from the different object of music video and the way she discussed about femininity power. On the other hand, this thesis analyzes the body as a site of struggle and free choices to choose her own will whether to be a "feminine" or "masculine" type of woman.

1.2. Field of the Study

The field of this study is related to the field of literature, particularly in Gender Studies.

1.3. Scope of the Study

This research focuses on the interpretation of body as a site of struggle in Katy Perry's music video, *Part of Me*. It aims at exploring the appearances in the music video *Part of Me* scene by scene. No other work of Katy Perry is taken into discussion. The analysis is done by applying Susan Bordo's Theory in *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and The Body* which discusses about the connection between the contemporary culture and the body.

1.4. Problem Formulation

This study has purposes to answer these following questions:

1. What are Katy Perry's appearances which conform femininity?
2. What are the transformations in Katy Perry's appearances which represent woman empowerment using Susan Bordo's Theory in *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and The Body*?

1.5. Objectives of the Study

With regards to the problems mentioned above, this research is conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To explore Katy Perry's appearances which conform femininity.
2. To discover the transformations in Katy Perry's appearances which represent woman empowerment using Susan Bordo's Theory in *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and The Body*.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This research deals with the empowerment of women as represented in Katy Perry's music video, *Part of Me*. Hopefully, this research will provide information on how the idea of feminism, especially women empowerment, are invested in the media, and in this case a music video. The research also will give inspirations to women so that they are aware of their capabilities in doing what they want to do. Women should have confidence that they are able to achieve what the opposite gender can.

1.7. Definition of Terms

- Feminism

Feminism is necessarily pro-woman, it makes claims for a rebalancing between women and men of the social, economic, and political power within given society, on behalf of both sexes in the name of their common humanity, but with respect for their differences (Offen, 1988, p. 151).

- Masculinity

Masculinity is set of behaviors and roles which associate with men in everyday practices and is socially constructed (Lewis, 2007, p. 4-6). These practices are represented especially by men, but also by women (Schippers, 2007, p. 86).

- Femininity

The term femininity relates to the characteristics linked with the female gender (Nillissen, 2007, p.1). Some characteristics referred to females involve “caring”, “sympathetic”, and “soft” (Hoffman & Borders, 2001, p. 41).

- Empowerment

Empowerment involves a process of change (Kabeer, 1999, p. 437). The core concept of empowerment is the ability to have the expansion of freedom of choice and action (Malhotra, Schuler, & Boender, 2002, p. 5, 6).

